

PARISH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

3.05.2020

Father Liam O'Connor, 37 Compton Avenue, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4UE

Presbytery 01903 242624 / Church repository 01903 506890

Email: emgoring@english-martyrs.co.uk Website: www.english-martyrs.co.uk

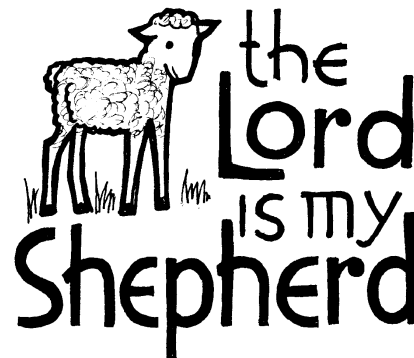
Deacon Gary Bevans 01903 503514

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 252878

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Masses will be celebrated without a congregation

Saturday	2 nd	Margaret Dunne RIP
Sunday	3 rd	Deceased Members of the Greavett Family
Monday	4 th	The Parish
Tuesday	5 th	For the Jewish People of the World
Wednesday	6 th	Anne & Nat Adams RIP
Thursday	7 th	intention of Leo Adams
Friday	8 th	Roger Davis RIP
Saturday	9 th	Caroline Roe RIP
Sunday	10 th	The Parish



TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 2:14.36-41. 1 Peter 2:20-25. John 10:1-10

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 2:4-9; John 14:1-12

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Halina Kuczynska-Mills & family, Rose Little, Albert Davitt, Lelia Murray, Nicholas & Mary Murphy, Anne Steere, Anthony Canneaux, Lawrence Brownlee, Margaret Birch, Lita Yong, Patrick Ryan, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gina Palermo, Elizabeth Hoskins, Joan Cutmore, Christine Watson, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY: Peggy Mardell, Alfreda Prokop, Alfreda Patten, Michael Crawley, Jenny Rusdell-Wilson, Brendan Casement, Mercedes Barranco
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

3. GIFT AID ENVELOPES: Worry not if you have run out of envelopes! The new envelopes are in the church and awaiting the weekend that we can all return to Mass.

4. We are now able to put each Sunday's pre-recorded Mass on our Parish website – www.english-martyrs.co.uk – while the present restrictions last. We hope this will be of some help. Please pass on the message. The website will carry the recording of each Sunday's Mass for several days. The Mass is being celebrated in the Good Shepherd Chapel as there would be too much echo in the main church. The readers are recorded in their own homes to comply with the safety measures. This Sunday the readers are Anne Niven and Veronica Louis. We are grateful to them and to Dermot Casey who is doing the filming and recording and to Christina Iden who is operating the website.

FATHER LIAM SAYS: Chatsmore Catholic High School, in our parish, is to become the first school in the United Kingdom to take St. Oscar Romero as its patron. It will be known as 'St Oscar Romero's Catholic School. We have become accustomed to the name Chatsmore School and it will take a little while to get accustomed to the change. But it is a wonderful change for the better. When the new name appears on the school noticeboard and begins to trip off our tongues people might begin to ask you: 'Who was Oscar Romero?' You can tell them: 'He was quite somebody'. His beloved people in San Salvador knew him by a different name. 'Monsênor', the people called him. Not . 'Monsênor' Romero. It was a sign of their affection and he richly deserved their affection. After only three years as Archbishop of San Salvador he was murdered by government forces in 1980 while saying Mass. He was a thorn in the side of the military Junta who were desperately trying to impose their will on the population. The wealth of the country was in the hands of very few people

while the vast majority were suppressed. When they asserted themselves they were mowed down. This period is referred to by the Salvadorians as 'the Locura' – 'the madness'. Many priests were murdered because their loyalties were with the oppressed, not the oppressor. Romero knew the danger he was in.

In his last newspaper interview with a Mexican paper, just two weeks before his death, he said: 'I have frequently been threatened with death. I ought to say that as a Christian I do not believe in death without Resurrection. If they kill me I will rise again in the people of El Salvador. I am not boasting. I say it with the greatest humility. I am bound as a pastor by a divine command to give my life for those whom I love and that is all Salvadorians, even those who are going to kill me. If they manage to carry out their threats from this moment I offer my blood for the redemption and resurrection of El Salvador... Can you tell them if they succeed in killing me that I pardon and bless those who do it? But I wish that they could realise that they are wasting their time. A bishop may die but the Church of God, which is the people, will never die... The Church will always exist as long as there is one baptised person. And that one baptised person who is left in the world is responsible before the world for holding aloft the banner of the Lord's truth and of his divine justice.'

Many priests lost their lives because of their support of those who were suppressed. Romero said at the funeral of a priest: 'We can present, along with the blood of teachers and labourers and the unemployed, the blood of our priests. This is communion in love. How sad it would be, if in a country where such horrible murders are being committed we were not to find priests among the victims. They are the testimony of a Church incarnated in the problems of her people. They may end up as martyrs but my priests are not going to leave because they are with the people.'

The night before his murder Romero made a personal appeal to those soldiers of the night who were most responsible for the growing horror. 'I would like to appeal in a special way to the men of the Army and in particular to the troops of the National Guard, the police and the garrisons. Brothers, you belong to our own people. You kill your own brothers and sisters and in the face of an order to kill that is given by a man. The law of God that says 'Do not kill' should prevail. No soldier is obliged to obey an order counter to the law of God. No one has to comply with an immoral law. It is time now that you recover your conscience and obey its dictates rather than the command of sins... Therefore, in the name of God and in the name of this long-suffering people, whose laments rise to heaven everyday more tumultuous. I beseech you, I beg you, I command you! In the name of God – cease the repression.' Those who were directing the violence would have regarded these words of the Archbishop as treachery. Salvadorian newspapers that supported the Junta had already suggested that Romero be assassinated. They had condemned him as a demagogic and violent archbishop 'who preached terrorism from his cathedral.' Another pronounced 'The armed forces should begin to oil their weapons.'

On the day of his final Mass a large advertisement announced his schedule for that evening and the fact that he was to be celebrant at the Requiem. He had said: 'if it comes to this I shall feel God very close as I draw my last breath. More valiant than surrender in death is the surrender of one's whole life – a life lived for God.' At the Mass, in the chapel of the Cancer hospital where he lived since he became Archbishop, Romero was finishing the homily: 'In this chalice the wine is transformed into the blood that was the price of salvation. May this body immolated and this blood sacrificed for mankind nourish us also that we may give our body and our blood to suffering and to pain – like Christ, not for self but to bring about justice and peace for our people.'

The instant when a shot rang out has been captured for eternity on audiotape. Some sisters and others at Mass quickly reached the fallen archbishop but he was already dead. His murderer had been seated in a car outside the open door of the church and he was quickly driven away. No one was ever charged in connection with the murder. Oscar Romero had often wished that if such a thing were to happen no one else would be killed with him.

Another quote: 'If we are worth anything, it is not because we have more money or more talent or more human qualities. In so far as we are worth anything, it is because we are grafted into Christ's life, his cross and Resurrection. That is a person's measure.'

Archbishop Romero's funeral took place on Palm Sunday. Bishops and priests had come from all over Europe, the United States and Central and South America to pay their respects. The only Salvadorean bishop there was his auxiliary, Bishop Rivera, who succeeded him as Archbishop. The other Salvadorean bishops had never supported him and sought to undermine him in their dealings with the Vatican and Pope John Paul II. However, 30 bishops and more than 200 priests and thousands of people from all corners of

El Salvador pressed into the Cathedral and the Plaza outside. Many people had walked for days to say their farewell to their 'Monsênor'. All went well according to Father James Connor, one of the concelebrants: 'until the moment in his homily when Cardinal Ernesto Ahumada of Mexico, the personal delegate of Pope John Paul II, began to praise Archbishop Romero as a man of peace and a foe of violence.' Echoing the teaching of Romero, the Cardinal said: 'Violence cannot kill truth or justice. We cannot love by hating, we cannot defend life by killing.' Then a bomb exploded outside the Cathedral. 'Next gun shots sharp and clear echoed off the walls. As another explosion reverberated, panic took hold... Looking about me (Connor wrote) I suddenly realised that aside from the nuns, priests and bishops the mourners were from the poor and powerless of El Salvador. As the violence persisted outside Oscar Romero was eventually buried in the tomb prepared for him in the Cathedral. Of the forty who died, probably all died of heart failure or asphyxia or were trampled under-foot. The government blamed 'leftists' for the violence but there were too many witnesses who exposed their lies. These crimes on the Plaza, like the killing of Romero and the thousands of others over the next decade were never 'solved' by the government.

Dr Robert Runcie was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury on the day of Romero's assassination. In his address, Dr Runcie spoke about his feeling of shock on hearing about it and referred to the horrified sympathy of the world at these tragic events. He said that this was 'a sober reminder that life and death for the gospel are still the way Christians are called to change the world.' In the Anglican Church Oscar Romero is also honoured as a saint as he is also in the Lutheran Church. A statue of Oscar Romero together with eleven other great heroes of our time have been placed on the Great West Door of Westminster Abbey. Might it be possible, too, to honour with them, a representation of the many valiant health-care workers who gave their precious lives in this pandemic?

Eleven Anglican bishops, including the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Rowan Williams, were present at the canonisation ceremony in Rome conducted by Pope Francis on 14th October 2018 who declared St Oscar Romero a Martyr for Social Justice.

This is a prayer invoking his help:

Defender of the poor, prophet of peace,
guide and inspire us to work for justice and reconciliation
with wisdom and compassion
in witness to our faith in Jesus Christ.
St Oscar Romero, Pray for us

I am indebted to Kevin Clarke's book 'Oscar Romero'

*May God bless you,
Fr. Liam.*

'Love must win out'

Some months after becoming Archbishop of San Salvador, Romero said: 'Let us not tire of preaching love. Though we see the waves of violence succeed in drowning the fire of Christian love, love must win out. It is the only thing that can.'

How I would like to engrave this idea on each one's heart. Christianity is not a collection of truths to be believed, of laws to be obeyed, of prohibitions. That makes it very distasteful.

Christianity is a person,

One who loves us so much.

One who calls for our love.

Christianity is Christ.'

THE PRAYER OF ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of
saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Amen